

VOL 17, Issue 1
Winter 2017

UNRAVELLED
Newsletter for School of Education and Psychology



Power for Mind & Soul



Congratulations,
May 2017
Graduates!

Pages 4-6



Celebrating 20 Years of Service



Rob Coombs, PhD, DMin, enjoys the model train set he built for his grandchildren.

When students think of the developmental psychology course they took at Southern Adventist University, they will often remember Professor Rob Coombs, who has taught in the School of Education and Psychology for the past 20 years. During these two decades, he has not only taught Developmental Psychology to thousands of students, but he also developed and taught the courses Issues in Adolescence and Psychology of Emerging Adulthood—two upper-division psychology classes that explore psychological and social dynamics underlying developmental issues. Professor Coombs has also taught other courses—Human Sexuality and Marriage and Family Counseling, a graduate-level course.

Passionate about his work as a professor, Coombs is also dedicated to strengthening marriages and families. He has shared his expertise with graduate students by licensing them to administer PREPARE/ENRICH, a marriage inventory, and facilitating training through the John Gottman Institute. *(continued on page 3)*

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK

As we come to the close of yet another school year, my thoughts are drawn to the Psychology Department. Professor Rob Coombs, who has touched so many lives during his 20 years of teaching at Southern, has decided the time has come to pursue other interests, such as completing an additional two books and spending time with his grandchildren.

Professor Coombs has been a steady force in the department, providing enhanced learning opportunities for students and developing the wildly successful *Journal of Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research* and the newly established *Journal of Interdisciplinary Graduate Research*, in addition to this newsletter, which is published two times per year. Best wishes and God's continued blessings to Rob and his family.

This has been an exciting semester with many students interning in counseling centers as part of our MS in school counseling and mental health counseling. We also have almost two dozen student teachers in schools across the Southern Union. Consistently we hear from site supervisors who say how well our students are doing in their placements. The individual responsible for finding our students' placements is Patricia Salazar, field experience coordinator for the School of Education and Psychology. She has established excellent, professionally based working relationships with Hamilton County schools, and it has paid off with numerous opportunities for our students to practice their skills. Unfortunately, she is moving on to greener pastures at the end of this year. We will miss her professionalism, her attention to detail, and her never-ending search for the best placements for our students. We are thankful for an outstanding approach to finding placements for our students. May God bless Patricia moving forward.



John McCoy, EdD

GREENLEAF SCHOLARSHIP

Vanessa Lynne Greenleaf graduated from Southern Missionary College in 1979 with a major in English and a minor in journalism. Her teaching career began in New York City schools after earning an MEd from Hunter College in 1990. After moving to Massachusetts two years later, she taught at Brimmer and May School, a K-12 private institution on the outskirts of Boston. She later transferred to the public middle school system in Beverly, Massachusetts.

Vanessa's academic strength lay in English and related social studies, but she became keenly aware that too many of her students were alienated from math. Yet she sensed her inadequacy to offer them more than routine help. Recalling her own similar feelings when a child and teenager and how she had overcome them when faced with the task of teaching math skills, she felt compelled to recycle herself as a math teacher.

Vanessa tutored herself, enrolled in math classes at the local university, and completed the required tests to achieve certification in math. She continually sought ways to dispel an ingrained fear of math among school children by convincing them that they were stronger than the threat they supposed mathematical abstractions posed. She emphasized that math was understandable and even friendly. Shortly after refocusing her career, she assumed the administrative responsibility of cultivating and overseeing innovative math instruction among the middle school math teachers in her school district.

Meanwhile, Vanessa was diagnosed with cancer. In February of 2013 she vacated her office, and six months later she passed away. Many of her former students attributed their academic success to her inspiring approaches to math.

Southern Adventist University's Vanessa Greenleaf Memorial Endowed Scholarship Fund for Elementary School Math Teachers has been established to perpetuate her memory and her vision for productive performance in mathematics by both teachers and students. Plans are to fund it completely by January of 2019 and to begin awarding scholarships as soon as possible, according to the endowment policies of the university.

One recipient will be selected annually by the education faculty. Recipients of the scholarship will compete for the award (more than \$2,000 at current rates) on the basis of academic effectiveness. Financial need is not a consideration for the award.

If you are interested in growing this endowment or making a gift to the spendable portion of the endowment so it can award a scholarship sooner, please contact the Advancement office on the campus of Southern (advancement@southern.edu or 423.236.2829).

UNRAVELED

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20 Years of Service *(continued from page 1)*

A man who truly enjoys getting to know his students and hearing their stories, Professor Coombs during his 20 years of teaching at Southern has maintained an open-door policy, through which many students have found a solace. His compassionate and perceptive nature, along with years of studying and understanding the core issues of family systems, has allowed him to reach and encourage many struggling students. During his time at Southern, Coombs has enriched the School of Education and Psychology in various ways outside of the classroom. In 2001 he introduced the Coombs Motivation Award. This award, along with a \$500 scholarship, is presented yearly to a junior-level psychology major who demonstrates an outstanding drive to learn.

Twelve years ago he spearheaded the production of the *Journal of Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research*, and in 2015 he established the *Journal of Interdisciplinary Graduate Research*. The journals serve as a professional platform on which undergraduate and graduate students are afforded the opportunity to showcase their academic achievements. The journals are available worldwide via Southern's online repository and have been downloaded by individuals all over the globe. Coombs has also overseen the production of the department's newsletter, *Unraveled*, since its inception in 2009.

Professor Coombs and his wife, Janet, who works as a surgeon, have always been strong advocates of higher learning. They have repeatedly opened up their home and provided financial support to make education possible for students who cannot afford it.

Upon retirement, Coombs will stay quite busy. He plans to dedicate several days a week to writing his two books and will spend time traveling, road cycling, working on his property, riding his horse, and enjoying his three grandchildren.

The School of Education and Psychology has been truly blessed by two decades of Coombs' service. His dedication to high-quality education and his heart for humanity have created an impact that is sure to have lasting effects after his retirement.

"Almost 20 years ago, in the fall of 1997 during my first semester in college, I took my first psychology class, Introduction to Psychology with Rob Coombs. It was his first class at Southern as well. I remember thinking the he was a great a teacher. What a pleasure it has been to teach alongside him in the Psychology Department for the past four years. And nothing has changed. Students come into my office all of the time telling me how great a teacher he is. We wish him all the best in his retirement!"

—Tron Wilder, Psychology Professor

"No class from Professor Coombs is ever boring. He uses such interesting stories and discussions that it feels like you learn without even trying. Working for him and taking classes from him is one of the highlights of undergrad for me."

—Hannah Odenthal, Senior Psychology Major

"Dr. Coombs has been not only been my professor, but also my mentor and friend. A week after being in his class as an undergrad, I switched my major to psychology. His passion for education and student success is truly

remarkable. From facilitating my premarital counseling to helping throw a baby shower for our firstborn, he has been supportive of me time and time again. To have taken a class from Dr. Coombs is to truly understand what being a passionate professor is all about. He will be greatly missed in this department, and we wish him nothing but the best in his retirement and this new stage of his life."

—Cristy Pratt, Psychology Professor

"You know an instructor is unusual when you arrive for class early and stay late, carve their office hours into your textbook (and use them), and altogether learn past your own limits. And to really learn, I feel we need that potentiated mix of safety and daring. Thanks to Rob Coombs, Summerour Hall was both haven and portal to me for four sweet years. Teacher, mentor, friend...Thank you for helping me make my way."

—Emily Garner, Psy.D, Alumnus

"Sitting in Professor Coombs' office back in 2010, I had no idea that I was sitting across from someone that would become such an integral part of my college education. I can't count how many times I've heard freshmen say that Development Psychology with Rob Coombs was life-changing. Dr. Coombs has such a wealth of knowledge and wisdom. One of the biggest reasons I came back to Southern to get my master's degree in counseling was because I knew that I still had so much to learn from him. Looking back, I know that I made the right decision in doing so."

—Emu Aragon, MS Counseling Student

"To quantify the meaning of a single person—or the impact that individual has made on the life of someone else—is the most difficult thing to do, especially when that single person, has impacted the lives of thousands of other people throughout his or her lifetime. It is often said there is a ripple effect when it comes to having influence on other people. A drop in the ocean produces a ripple, which then produces a wavethat eventually crashes against the shore, creating the most beautiful sight and sound the world has ever heard. It is not often easy to accomplish, nor is it often done to the magnitude that Dr. Coombs has done it. His life has compounded the ripple effect, as he has touched the hearts and minds of the many fellow staff members who became friends and the thousands of students who became family."

—Rainee Seibert, Alumnus

"Rob Coombs has been the senior statesman of the Psychology Department for nearly two decades. I have had the privilege of working with a deeply committed, compassionate, forward-thinking, highly intelligent, and organized professional for 17 years. He has been great to work with, and as a colleague and a friend, I will miss him greatly. We share a love for organic gardening, and his occasional gifts of fresh eggs were a boon to our palettes in the Psychology Pod! I wish him the best."

—Ruth Williams, Professor and Director of Psychology Program

Congratulations, Graduates!



Name: Alia Adams
Major: MS School Counseling
Hometown: Springfield, IL
Future Plans: Move to Nashville, TN, marry my best friend, and pursue a career in school counseling



Name: Sephora Alvarez
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Glendale, CA
Future Plans: Potentially take a year off to serve as a student missionary in Palau



Name: Denise Bailey
Major: MSED Literacy Education
Hometown: Crossville, TN
Future Plans: By God's grace, I plan to continue teaching and at some point become a missionary



Name: Carissa Belonio
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Loma Linda, CA
Future Plans: Teach at Atlanta North SDA School



Name: Garret Bergherm
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Fletcher, NC
Future Plans: Work and eventually pursue graduate school



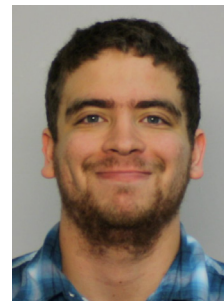
Name: Jeffane Bernardin
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Atlanta, GA
Future Plans: Taking a year off to travel and then go to grad school



Name: Katie Bernet
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Orlando, FL
Future Plans: Marrying my best friend and begin teaching in August



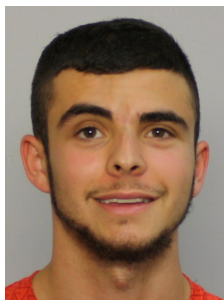
Name: Erin Bush
Major: MS Clinical Mental Health
Hometown: Falling Waters, WV
Future Plans: Looking forward to settling down to wherever God leads.



Name: Chris Caldwell
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Nashville, TN
Future Plans: Pursue my master's degree in school counseling and move to the West Coast to work



Name: Veronica Carballo
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Chattanooga, TN
Future Plans: Study abroad in South Korea for 6 months and then pursue graduate school



Name: Nick Ciminello
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: Topsham, ME
Future Plans: Teach 6-12 grades PE at Miami Union Academy



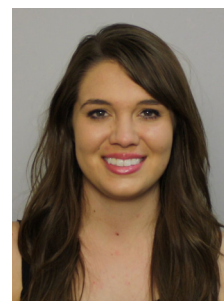
Name: Leah DeWeez
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: Memphis, TN
Future Plans: Attend graduate school at Indiana University to study secondary math education



Name: Beverly Ditta
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Orlando, FL
Future Plans: Pursue a master's degree in psychology



Name: Dennys Dominguez
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Orlando, FL
Future Plans: Attend graduate school

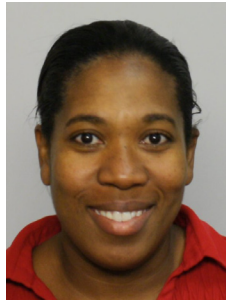


Name: Kayla Fogg
Major: Elementary Education & Business Management
Hometown: Orlando, FL
Future Plans: Begin working at Adventist Health System in August

Not pictured: Kevin Canas, Psychology; Amanda Cook, Secondary Education; Heidi Gaitan, MSED Outdoor Education; Obadiah Groft, Secondary Education; Cheryl Guider, MSED Instructional Leadership; Katrina Schreiner, MSED Literacy Education; Nicholas Sigler, MSED Instructional Leadership



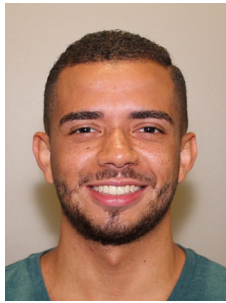
Name: Luke Foster
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: New Market, VA
Future Plans: Teach high school math near Collegedale, TN



Name: Klossmeryl Francois
Major: MSED Literacy Education
Hometown: Birmingham, AL
Future Plans: Continue my career as a teacher



Name: Janelle Glass
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: Amity, Arkansas
Future Plans: Teach music to people and be a musician for the rest of my life



Name: David Grau
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: North Brunswick, NJ
Future Plans: Work as a secondary physical education teacher



Name: Corey Grimm
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Lawrenceburg, TN
Future Plans: Work at an elementary school



Name: Camille Harr
Major: MS Clinical Mental Health & MS School Counseling
Hometown: Chattanooga, TN
Future Plans: Get married and move to Germany to teach



Name: Amber Heldzinger
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Apopka, FL
Future Plans: Work as an elementary school teacher



Name: James Holtzclaw
Major: MSED Outdoor Education
Hometown: Jasper, TN
Future Plans: Support my wife and minister to inner-city children



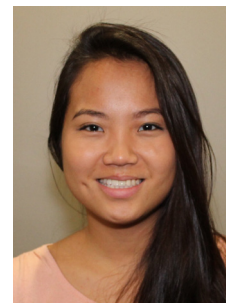
Name: Patricia Isom
Major: MS Clinical Mental Health
Hometown: Fairfield Glade, TN
Future Plans: Secure a registered intern position at a counseling agency and pursue licensure



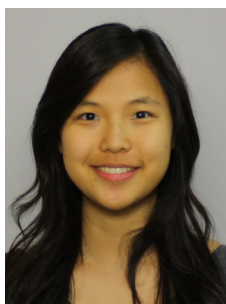
Name: Crystal James
Major: MSED Instructional Leadership
Hometown: Bradenton, FL
Future Plans: I have many plans and trust that God will make my path clear



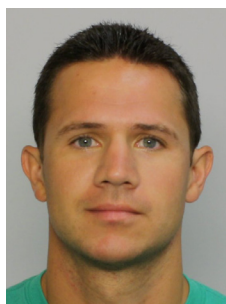
Name: Bethany Johnson
Major: MSED Instructional Leadership
Hometown: Hendersonville, NC
Future Plans: Teach high school English



Name: Hayeon Kang
Major: Psychology
Hometown: South Korea/Yorktown, VA
Future Plans: I will be attending graduate school for speech-language pathology



Name: Ann Lee
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Cresskill, NJ
Future Plans: Get a PhD in clinical psychology with an emphasis in neuropsychology from Loma Linda University



Name: Scott McCoy
Major: MSED Instructional Leadership
Hometown: Orlando, FL
Future Plans: Work as an administrator in education



Name: Lindsay Morton
Major: MSED Instructional Leadership
Hometown: Asheville, NC
Future Plans: Get married and teach at Mile High Academy

MAY GRADUATES



Name: Rebecca Myshrall
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Freeport, ME
Future Plans: I want to get a PhD in political science and become a professor and do research



Name: Isabel Paiva
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Leominster, MA
Future Plans: Doing God's will



Name: Kaitlin Pasco
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Siloam Springs, AR
Future Plans: Work as a teacher at the school God leads me to



Name: Shelly Payne
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: Calhoun, GA
Future Plans: Teaching wherever God leads



Name: Brandy Phillips
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Ooltewah, TN
Future Plans: Teach second grade at Harrison Elementary School



Name: Marielsy Pimentel
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Kissimmee, FL
Future Plans: Pursue a master's degree in mental health counseling at Andrews University



Name: Melissa Salazar
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Los Angeles, CA
Future Plans: Teach grades 3-5 at Souther Bend Jr. Academy



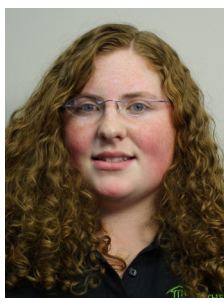
Name: Megan Simpson
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: Placerville, CA
Future Plans: Become a high school English teacher in Hamilton County



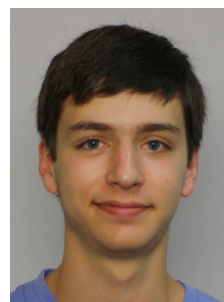
Name: Karin Sokolies
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Racine, WI
Future Plans: Pursue graduate school and then go wherever the Lord leads.



Name: Bethany Stevens
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Flint, MI
Future Plans: To be a teacher, serving God wherever He calls me to go



Name: Loubeth Vaughn
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: Thorne Bay, AK
Future Plans: Teaching grades 6-12 mathematics in Sand Point, Alaska



Name: Randy Wiedemann
Major: Secondary Education
Hometown: Luray, VA
Future Plans: I am looking to start a string studio and teach any grade level



Name: Jennifer Wrate
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Chattanooga, TN
Future Plans: Teach wherever God leads me



Name: Allissa Wright
Major: Elementary Education
Hometown: Danville, VT
Future Plans: Teach in the Adventist school system

COUNSELING ALUMNI UPDATE: DANIEL OLSON

FROM CAREER UNCERTAINTY TO CAREER COUNSELOR

Five years after graduating from Southern with a bachelor's degree in print journalism, I wanted to change my major. My position at a daily newspaper was unfulfilling, and I desired more satisfaction and purpose from my career.

My occupational exploration path led me back to Southern—more specifically, to the Student Success Center in Lynn Wood Hall.

After completing several career assessments, I learned that my interests and personality type were a mediocre match for the journalism industry.

Fast forward 10 years, and now I serve as the career services coordinator at Southern. I meet with students to provide career guidance and to administer and interpret the same assessments that delivered clarity to my vocational vagueness a decade earlier.

My own assessment results had suggested that the fields of counseling and teaching would match my interests, and in 2008, I enrolled at Southern again. This time I pursued a master's degree in mental health counseling from the School of Education and Psychology. Initially I considered specializing in marriage and family therapy, but as I neared completion of my graduate degree, my perceptions shifted. The use of therapeutic interventions to manage mental and emotional issues is important,

but I questioned whether the typical work environment would fit with my values and personality.

I decided I wanted to pursue employment on a university campus—perhaps as a dean or financial counselor or career advisor.

However, after graduation, the path to my current job included several obstacles and even a detour. I worked for eight months at an outpatient mental health facility. The work was challenging, and the compensation was paltry. Meanwhile, I pursued employment opportunities on college campuses without success. In fact, I even returned to my previous position at the newspaper while I pondered my next move.

I have been working at Southern for about two years. I'm blessed to be part of the incredible Student Success Center team and work on the same campus as my wonderful wife, Heidi, who serves as the office manager in the Chemistry Department.

I'm also grateful to assist students with exploring various majors and career paths. I enjoy helping students write resumés and cover letters while preparing for a job search. Their stories of securing an internship or job after visiting Career Services are an inspiration.

When working with students, especially those near graduation, I underscore the



Daniel Olson, career services coordinator at Southern, and his wife, Heidi, hold their Australian shepherds, Cali and Ares, at their home in Collegedale.

importance of networking. My supervisor, Jim Wampler, director of the Student Success Center, taught two of my master's-level classes. I didn't know at the time that while I diligently participated in his class, I was preparing for a job interview several years later.

While my career trajectory has zigged and zagged, I value the lessons I have learned along the way. I appreciate that God led my journey from career uncertainty to career counselor and that I'm in a position to share my story with others.

Daniel's Resumé Tips

- 1. Know what to add:** Include a short professional summary near the top of your resumé. Also, highlight your relevant responsibilities and achievements in your professional experience section.
- 2. Know what to remove:** Eliminate the objective statement, references, and any mention of hobbies. Define your skills when describing your work history and avoid listing vague soft skills, such as "team player" or "critical thinker."
- 3. Use a second set of eyes:** Ask someone with writing and editing skills to review your resumé, or consider hiring a professional resume writer.

If you would like to receive future *Unraveled* newsletters electronically, please email uas@southern.edu and request to be added to the list.



**School of
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